'Streaker' recalls fond days in Pas

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If you saw a nude boy wave at you on Highway 90 and then jump into the Pascagoula River, you may have seen Lewis M. Tricon.

Of course, you would have probably been driving a Ford Model T.

In 1919, many drivers rolling onto the woooden barge that crossed Pascagoula river witnessed Tricon and his friends perform this streak, wave and dive stunt.

"I couldn't have been more than 10," the 81-year-old man said in defense of himself recently.

Tricon, now retired from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and living in Vicksburg, recently visited his childhood hometown. He lived in Pascagoula until he was 13 and has sinced moved around the South many times, but he said his favorite memories are of Pascagoula.

He remembers fun days of playing with a homemade baseball composed of stocking thread or watching fishing boat races. Fishermen would paint their boats green, wax the bottom of them and race them down the river powered by one-cylinder engines.

Tricon also remembers more frightening days, like the time in 1923 when an area of the town was gutted by a fire. Another fire started in a baker's shop years later and quickly burned down

MOSS POINT's Eddie Khayat (left) on his in-house show on National Cable Network in Pascagoula talks with Lewis Tricon and his wife, Vivian, about life in Pascagoula between 1909 and 1922. Tricon recently returned to the coast and showed off pictures taken from that era. He grew up in Pascagoula and says the city holds the best memories of his life.

every wooden house in its path. The only way to stop it, Tricon said, was to dynamite a house to the ground so the fire was stopped from jumping house-to-house.

Tricon had some important political connections while he was growing up, which he used to his advantage.

"I was friendly with the police chief's kid," he explained, "and when the troops got back from WWI, they gave them a party at the old courthouse. So I got to go in and eat the goodies."

He used this same liason to sneak into the courthouse. His friends and he were once caught hiding in an empty jury box, listening to a criminal trial.

Tricon left Pascagjoula in 1922 when the population was about 4,000. He met his wife, Vivian Tricon, in Vicksburg, and the two retired from the Corps of Engineers 41 years later.

"When I came back," he said, "the courthouse was where my house used to be." He has forgiven the city for tearing down his house.

"I have enjoyed my life from beginning to end and I've made no serious errors," he said, summing up his 81-year-old life so far.

Apparently Pascagoula gave him a good start.

TRICON, Lewis